

Thomas Jefferson to Henry Dearborn, July 13, 1807, The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR J. MSS. (HENRY DEARBORN.)

Washington, July 13, 07.

Dear Sir, —I wrote you on the 7th; since that we learn that the *Bellona* & *Leopard* remaining in Hampton Road, the other two vessels have returned to the Capes of Chesapeake, where they have been reinforced by another frigate and a sloop of war; we know not from whence. This induces us to suppose they do not mean an immediate attack on Norfolk, but to retain their present position till further orders from their Admiral. I am inclined to think that the body of militia now in the field in Virginia would need to be regulated according to these views. They are in great want of artillery, the State possessing none. Their subsistence also, & other necessary expenses, require immediate attention from us, the finances of the State not being at all in a condition to meet these calls. We have some applications for the loan of field-pieces. The transportation of heavy cannon to Norfolk & Hampton, is rendered difficult by the blockade of those ports. These things are of necessity reserved for your direction on your return, as nobody here is qualified to act in them. It gives me sincere concern that events should thus have thwarted your wishes. Should the *Bellona* and *Leopard* retire, & a disposition be shown by the British commanders to restore things to a state of peace until they hear from their government, we may go into summer quarters without injury to the public safety, having previously made all necessary arrangements. But if the present hostile conduct is pursued,

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I fear we shall be obliged to keep together, or at least within consulting distance. I salute you with sincere affection & respect.